Vol. VI. Numb. 52

# THE OBSERVATOR.

*of the* French *News. Of raiſing the Siege of* Thoulon: *Remarks thereon. Of the King of* Sweden's *evacuating* Saxony. *Another Benefit-Ticket for our Merchants: With Obſervations upon it. On a Story in the* Gazette. *Of the Dubiouſneſs of the News.*

From Wednesday, Auguſt 27. to Saturday, Auguſt 30. 1707.

*Country-m.* MAſter, my Heart's broke; we are all untwiſted: The Siege of *Thoulon* is rais'd.

*Obſ.* As how, *Roger*? Who did it?

*Country-m.* The Duke of *Savoy* and Prince *Eugene*. They found 'twas to no Purpoſe to carry it on, and that large Detachments were coming againſt them; and ſo they quitted the Enterprize.

*Obſ.* This is *French* News.

*Country-m.* It is ſo; but it receives ſome Credit amongſt the honeſt People.

*Obſ.* Before we enter on the Particulars of this Story, I muſt obſerve two things. Firſt, That by the laſt Mail, which was the long Poſt, no *Paris Gazette* came over. Now, had this News been true, they would rather have ſent their Gazettes in abundance, than have ſtop't 'em. Secondly, That there have been no Rejoycings in the Enemies Armies, either in *Flanders* or *Germany*, on this Occaſion; when every Body knows the Vanity of the *French* in ſuch Caſes, and how quick they are at firing of Cannon, and ſinging *Te Deum*, on every little Advantage; nay, when they have had none at all; witneſs their rejoycing for taking the Town of *Barcelona*, the very Day their Troops rais'd the Siege.

Now, *Roger*, let us examine the Particulars of the Story, and ſet the Hare's Head againſt the Gooſe Giblets, and then ſee how 'twill look. The Duke rais'd the Siege in the Night, ſtole away very privately, ſo that no Body knew it 'till next Morning, and thus the *French* loſt an Opportunity of falling on their Rear. There us'd to be ſome Signals of raiſing a Siege, the battering Cannon and Mortars us'd to be ſent off firſt. Well, but what, did the Duke and the Prince march off, and leave all the Artillery, Mortars, Bombs, and Ammunition behind them?

No, they did not: The Cannon, Mortars, *&c.* were put on Board the Confederate Fleet. Now, let any rational Man conſider the Time the Fleet had to get theſe weighty Stores on Board, and he muſt conclude, that there were more Days requiſite for ſuch a Service, than they could have Hours allow'd 'em by this Account.

But the prettieſt Jeſt of all, is, they tell us, as ſoon as the Fleet had got the Artillery on Board, they ſail'd directly for *Barcelona:* What, with the Duke's and Prince's Artillery? Did they make a Preſent of thoſe coſtly Stores to the King of *Spain*, and leave themſelves unprovided? Relations that ſhock common Reaſon, methinks, ſhould not meet with any Credit.

*Country-m.* Maſter, what you ſay, gives me great Hopes that this is a *French* Forgery. But when I was at *London*, I heard ſome Tories ſay, *There's your Sir* Cloudſley Shovell, *why did not he go into the Harbour, and deſtroy the* French *Ships? What, was he afraid of Forts and a Boom?*

*Obſ.* I wiſh, *Roger*, that all the Ships in *Thoulon* Harbour were equipp'd, and at Sea, double Mann'd with *Engliſh* Tories, and Sir *Cloudſley* a long Side of 'em, Yard-arm to Yard-arm, and then I would aſk 'em, whether he was afraid to fight Ships? But 'tis none of his Buſineſs to fight Forts; our Ships are built to fight Wooden, and not Stone Walls. When we deſtroy'd the Ships at *Vigo*, the Fleet did not enter the Harbour, until ſuch time as the Duke of *Ormond* had landed, and taken thoſe Forts that could annoy 'em in their Enterance. Beſides, we muſt conſider where our Fleet is, how remote from Home; and that we have no Port in thoſe Parts, to which they can retire, in Caſe they are diſabl'd.

I have ever made it my Obſervation of the Tory Party in *Britain*, that upon any Diſadvantage we have met with, or any Failure in Point of Enterprize, that our Generals, our Admirals, and our Miniſtry, have been accus'd very maliciouſly, without the leaſt Occaſion or Ground of Complaint. All our Queen and her Miniſtry can do, is, to form Deſigns for the Good of the common Cauſe, and 'tis her Officers Duty to ſee them punctually and faithfully executed; but none can take the Power out of God's Hand; he is, and will be ſupream Governor of the Univerſe; 'tis his Bleſſing on the Inſtruments, that gives the Succeſs. 'Tis our Duty to uſe the Means, but we muſt wait his good Time, for a Bleſſing upon them.

Who knows, but God is angry with us for the vain Preſumption and Aſſurance of our People in this Point? I think there was never ſuch a Run of Preſumption and Folly in *Britain* before, even contrary to common Senſe and Reaſon; as if they had enter'd into the Secrets of the Almighty, and knew the Events of Things before they happen: So that they have wager'd upon Providence. Gentlemen, your wiſe and prudent Fore-fathers did not behave themſelves thus on ſuch Occaſions. They did not lay Wagers on the Providence of God; they did not curſe and ſwear at Taverns, and drink Healths to the taking of Towns: No, their Practice was, to faſt and pray, and humbly implore Divine Aſſiſtance for Succeſs.

*Country-m.* Maſter, I am extreamly rejoyc'd, to hear, that the Difference betwixt the *Emperor*

and

and the King of *Sweden*, are ſo far adjuſted. And now that Great Monarch is marching againſt the *Czar*.

*Obſ.* I pray God bleſs him; may his good Preſence attend him in his March, and cover his Head in the Day of Battel: May he return victorious, and enjoy the Crown the Remainder of his Days in Peace and Proſperity. But, *Roger*, I am afraid the *Czar* will not hazzard a Battel; he's troop'd off already, and muſt be hunted, before he is caught.

*Country-m.* Maſter, here's another Benefit-Ticket come up for our Merchants.

*Obſ.* What is it, *Roger*, a good one?

*Country-m.* Not ſo good a one as the laſt. It ſeems the *Stockton* Fleet, I think they call it, was coming to *London*, under Convoy of one little Frigat, call'd the *Nightingail*, and off the Harbour of *Harwich*, fell in with ſix *French* Gallies from *Dunkirk*, who engag'd the *Nightingail*: Our *Nightingail* ſung brave *Britiſh* Notes for a long time, for the Space of two Hours; but 'twas the *Obſervator*'s Fight, ſix to one, and ſo the poor *Nightingail* was Wing-broken, and taken Priſoner.

The next Day, ſome of our Merchant-Ships came into *Harwich*, and gave an Account of the Engagement, and farther declar'd, the *French* Ships had 3000 Men on Board, and that 'tis believ'd, their Deſign was to come into the Harbour, and plunder and burn the Town. The Inhabitants were in a great Conſternation, and began to rub up their old Swords and Guns.

*Obſ. Roger*, I can't be heartily ſorry for our Traders Loſſes, becauſe they won't help themſelves, when the Way for Relief is open and clear; but I am always glad under our Misfortunes, to hear that the Commanders of our Ships, at all Times behave themſelves ſo well, and ſo much like ancient *Britains*; who could do more, than the brave Gentleman, that commanded that Ship, has done?

If the *French* have taken any conſiderable Number of thoſe Ships, they have got no inconſiderable Purchaſe; for tho' thoſe Veſſels that uſe that Trade, are of no great Burden, yet what they carry, is of great Value; they come chiefly loaden with Lead and Butter, two Commodities the *French* much want, and I find they will get it at the beſt Hand, if they can.

I will adviſe the Merchants no more; but I have one Word of Advice to the People of *Harwich*, that is, to get their Swords and Guns clean before the *French* come, and not afterwards. I don't wiſh, that any Misfortune like this ſhould happen to any of our Sea-Port Towns; but had the *French* landed, we ſhould have made a Diſcovery in what Condition our Militia is to defend the Coaſts.

*Country-m.* Maſter, here's the *Gazette*.

*Obſ.* What ha'ſt found in it?

*Country-m.* A Story that I can't help relating. A Party of the Duke of *Savoy*'s Soldiers went into a Houſe, not far from the Camp, in Search for Proviſſons, and obſerving a Vault that was lock'd up, and barr'd with particular Care, they broke it open, in Expectation of ſome valuable Booty, but found in it a Man loaden with Chains, and almoſt dead with Famine: After having receiv'd ſome Refreſhment from them, he told them, that he had been confin'd in the Dungeon where they found him, above ſixteen Years, and fed all that Time with Bread and Water only. He was a Priſoner of State, and had been ſo long diſus'd from Speech, that he could not find Words to expreſs himſelf.

*Obſ.* Behold, *Roger*, what a merciful Government the Tories and Tackers would bring upon us! This they want to be eſtabliſh'd in *Britain*; and ſee what a cruel, tyrannical Monſter the Allies are engag'd againſt. The Tyrant muſt not be depos'd; no, by no Means. —— What ſays the *Gazette* about *Thoulon*?

*Country-m.* Much the ſame with the other News:—All the News is *French*.

*Obſ. Roger*, We have had a very dull Evening of it. Our Diſcourſe has been on Subjects not very agreeable. The *French* News is always dubious, and generally falſe, if they give us any Truth, it is by Way of Amuſement:

*Some Truth there is, but blended ſtill with Lies,*
*To cheat the Fools, and puzzle all the Wiſe.*

Our bad News, that's certain enough; that's at our Door. All I can ſay, to conclude this melancholy Diſcourſe, is, that when we deſerve Succeſs, we ſhall have it; and the beſt Way to obtain it, is for every Man to mend one.

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## Advertiſements.

This Day is publiſh'd,

*** An Anſwer to Captain *Dampier*'s Vindication of his Voyage to the *South-Seas*, in the Ship *St. George*. With particular Obſervations on his ungenerous, falſe and barbarous Uſage to his Ship's Crew. By *John Welbe*, Midſhip-man, on Board Captain *Dampier*'s Ship. Sold by *B. Bragge*, in *Pater-Noſter-Row*. Price 1 *d.*

Juſt publiſh'd,

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*Theſe are to give Notice,*

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*LONDON*, Printed for the Author, JOHN TUTCHIN.